

CLAIMS

1. A priority determination device provided in one of a plurality of electronic apparatuses that can be connected
5 to one another, are respectively assigned priorities, and respectively have operation units each performing a predetermined operation, characterized by comprising:

connected state detection means for detecting the change in the connected state of said plurality of electronic
10 apparatuses;

first identification means for identifying the electronic apparatus or apparatuses connected after the change in the connected state by communicating with the other electronic apparatus or apparatuses in response to the
15 detection of the change by said connected state detection means;

first judgment means for judging whether or not said one electronic apparatus has the highest priority on the basis of the priority of each of the electronic apparatuses
20 identified by said first identification means; and

first operation allowance/inhibition means for allowing the operation performed by said operation unit when said first judgment means judges that said one electronic apparatus has the highest priority, while inhibiting the
25 operation performed by said operation unit when said first

judgment means judges that said one electronic apparatus does not have the highest priority.

2. The priority determination device according to claim
5 1, characterized in which

priorities are previously set, respectively, in identification information for identifying said plurality of electronic apparatuses,

said first identification means comprising
10 first communication means for receiving the identification information from the other electronic apparatus or apparatuses connected after the change in the connected state in response to the detection of the change by said connected state detection means, and transmitting the
15 self identification information to the other electronic apparatus or apparatuses connected after the change in the connected state,

said first judgment means comprising
first comparison means for comparing the identification
20 information for the other electronic apparatus or apparatuses received by said communication means with the self identification information, to judge whether or not said one electronic apparatus has the highest priority.

25 3. The priority determination device according to claim

2, characterized by further comprising

storage means for storing apparatus connection information representing the electronic apparatuses which are connected to one another on the basis of the

5 identification information for the other electronic apparatus or apparatuses received by said first communication means,

said operation unit having the function of operating the electronic apparatuses connected on the basis of the
10 apparatus connection information stored in said storage means.

4. The priority determination device according to claim 2 or 3, characterized by further comprising

15 power supply state detection means for detecting the change in the states of power supplies in the plurality of electronic apparatuses which are connected to one another,

second identification means for identifying the electronic apparatus in which the power supply is in the on
20 state out of the other electronic apparatus or apparatuses connected after the change in the states of the power supplies by communicating with the connected other electronic apparatus or apparatuses in response to the detection of the change by said power supply state detection means,

25 second judgment means for judging whether or not said

one electronic apparatus has the highest priority on the basis of the priority of each of the electronic apparatuses identified by said second identification means, and

second operation allowance/inhibition means for
5 allowing the operation performed by said operation unit when said second judgment means judges that said one electronic apparatus has the highest priority, while inhibiting the operation performed by said operation unit when said second judgment means judges that said one electronic apparatus does
10 not have the highest priority.

5. The priority determination device according to claim 4, characterized in that

said second identification means comprises
15 second communication means for receiving the identification information, together with power supply information representing the states of the power supplies, from the other electronic apparatus or apparatuses connected after the change in the states of the power supplies in
20 response to the detection of the change by said power supply state detection means, and transmitting power supply information representing the state of the self power supply, together with the self identification information, to the other electronic apparatus or apparatuses connected after the
25 change in the connected state, and

said second judgment means comprises

second comparison means for comparing the
identification information for the electronic apparatuses in
which the power supplies are in the on state on the basis of
5 the power supply information for the other electronic
apparatus or apparatuses and the self power supply
information which have been received by said second
communication means, to judge whether or not said one
electronic apparatus out of the electronic apparatuses in
10 which the power supplies are in the on state has the highest
priority.

6. The priority determination device according to any
one of claims 1 to 5, characterized in that said operation
15 unit comprises a speech recognition operation unit that
performs a speech recognition operation.

7. A priority determination device provided in one of
a plurality of electronic apparatuses that can be connected
20 to one another, are respectively assigned priorities, and
respectively have operation units each performing a
predetermined operation, characterized by comprising:

power supply state detection means for detecting the
change in the states of power supplies in the plurality of
25 electronic apparatuses which are connected to one another;

identification means for identifying the electronic apparatus in which the power supply is in the on state out of the electronic apparatus or apparatuses connected after the change in the states of the power supplies by

5 communicating with the connected other electronic apparatus or apparatuses in response to the detection of the change by said power supply state detection means;

judgment means for judging whether or not said one electronic apparatus has the highest priority on the basis
10 of the priority of each of the electronic apparatuses identified by said identification means; and

operation allowance/inhibition means for allowing the operation performed by said operation unit when said judgment means judges that said one electronic apparatus has the
15 highest priority, while inhibiting the operation performed by said operation unit when said judgment means judges that said one electronic apparatus does not have the highest priority.

20 8. The priority determination device according to claim 7, characterized in which

priorities are previously set, respectively, in identification information for identifying said plurality of electronic apparatuses,

25 said identification means comprising

communication means for receiving the identification information, together with power supply information representing the states of the power supplies, from the other electronic apparatus or apparatuses connected after the
5 change in the states of the power supplies in response to the detection of the change by said power supply state detection means, and transmitting power supply information representing the state of the self power supply, together with the self identification information, to the other electronic
10 apparatus or apparatuses connected after the change in the connected state,

said judgment means comprising

comparison means for comparing the identification information for the electronic apparatuses in which the power
15 supplies are in the on state on the basis of the power supply information for the other electronic apparatus or apparatuses and the self power supply information which have been received by said communication means, to judge whether or not said one electronic apparatus out of the electronic apparatuses in
20 which the power supplies are in the on state has the highest priority.

9. The priority determination device according to claim 8, characterized by further comprising
25 storage means for storing apparatus connection

information representing the electronic apparatuses which are connected to one another on the basis of the identification information for the other electronic apparatus or apparatuses received by said communication

5 means,

said operation unit having the function of operating the electronic apparatuses connected on the basis of the apparatus connection information stored in said storage means.

10

10. The priority determination device according to any one of claims 7 to 9, characterized in that said operation unit comprises a speech recognition operation unit that performs a speech recognition operation.

15

11. A priority determining method provided in one of a plurality of electronic apparatuses that can be connected to one another, are respectively assigned priorities, and respectively have operation units each performing a predetermined operation, the priority determining method according to claim 1, characterized by comprising the steps of:

detecting the change in the connected state of said plurality of electronic apparatuses;

25 identifying the electronic apparatus or apparatuses,

other than said one electronic apparatus, connected after the change in the connected state by communicating with the other electronic apparatus or apparatuses in response to the detection of the change;

5 judging whether or not said one electronic apparatus has the highest priority on the basis of the priority of each of the identified electronic apparatuses; and

allowing the operation performed by said operation unit when it is judged that said one electronic apparatus has the
10 highest priority, while inhibiting the operation performed by said operation unit when it is judged that said one electronic apparatus does not have the highest priority.

12. The priority determining method according to claim
15 11, characterized in which

priorities are previously set, respectively, in identification information for identifying said plurality of electronic apparatuses,

said identifying step comprising the step of
20 receiving the identification information from the other electronic apparatus or apparatuses connected after the change in the connected state in response to the detection of the change by said step of detecting the change in the connected state, and transmitting the self identification
25 information to the other electronic apparatus or apparatuses

connected after the change in the connected state,

said judging step comprising the step of

judging whether or not said one electronic apparatus has
the highest priority by comparing the identification

5 information for the other electronic apparatus or apparatuses
received by said communication means with the self
identification information.

13. The priority determining method according to claim
10 12, characterized by further comprising the step of

storing apparatus connection information representing
the electronic apparatuses which are connected to one another
on the basis of said received identification information for
the other electronic apparatus or apparatuses,

15 said operation unit operating the electronic
apparatuses connected on the basis of said stored apparatus
connection information.

14. A priority determining method provided in one of
20 a plurality of electronic apparatuses that can be connected
to one another, are respectively assigned priorities, and
respectively have operation units each performing a
predetermined operation, characterized by comprising the
steps of:

25 detecting the change in the states of power supplies in

identifying the electronic apparatus in which the power supply is in the on state out of the electronic apparatus or apparatuses connected after the change in the states of the power supplies by communicating with the connected other electronic apparatus or apparatuses in response to the detection of the change by said step of detecting the change in the states of the power supplies;

10 judging whether or not said one electronic apparatus has
the highest priority on the basis of the priority of each of
the electronic apparatuses identified by said step of
identifying the electronic apparatus in which the power
supply is in the on state; and

15 allowing the operation performed by said operation unit
when it is judged that said one electronic apparatus has the
highest priority, while inhibiting the operation performed
by said operation unit when it is judged that said one
electronic apparatus does not have the highest priority.

20

15. The priority determining method according to claim 14, characterized in which

priorities are previously set, respectively, in
identification information for identifying said plurality of
25 electronic apparatuses,

said identifying step comprising the step of
receiving the identification information, together
with power supply information representing the states of the
power supplies, from the other electronic apparatus or
5 apparatuses connected after the change in the states of the
power supplies in response to the detection of the change,
and transmitting the power supply information representing
the state of the self power supply, together with the self
identification information, to the other electronic
10 apparatus or apparatuses connected after the change in the
connected state,

said judging step comprising the step of
judging whether or not said one electronic apparatus out
of the electronic apparatuses in which the power supplies are
15 in the on state has the highest priority by comparing the
identification information for the electronic apparatuses in
which the power supplies are in the on state on the basis of
the power supply information for the other electronic
apparatus or apparatuses and the self power supply
20 information which have been received.

16. The priority determining method according to claim
15, characterized by further comprising the step of
storing apparatus connection information representing
25 the electronic apparatuses which are connected to one another

on the basis of said received identification information for the other electronic apparatus or apparatuses,

said operation unit operating the electronic apparatuses connected on the basis of said stored apparatus
5 connection information.

17. A priority determination program executed by a processing device in one of a plurality of electronic apparatuses that can be connected to one another, are
10 respectively assigned priorities, and respectively have operation units each performing a predetermined operation, characterized by comprising:

processing for detecting the change in the connected state of said plurality of electronic apparatuses;

15 processing for identifying the electronic apparatus or apparatuses, other than said one electronic apparatus, connected after the change in the connected state by communicating with the other electronic apparatus or apparatuses in response to the detection of the change;

20 processing for judging whether or not said one electronic apparatus has the highest priority on the basis of the priority of each of the identified electronic apparatuses; and

processing for allowing the operation performed by said
25 operation unit when it is judged that said one electronic

apparatus has the highest priority, while inhibiting the operation performed by said operation unit when it is judged that said one electronic apparatus does not have the highest priority.

5

18. The priority determination program according to claim 17, characterized in which

priorities are previously set, respectively, in identification information for identifying said plurality of electronic apparatuses,

10 said identifying processing comprising processing for receiving the identification information from the other electronic apparatus or apparatuses connected after the change in the connected state in response to the detection of the change in the connected state by the processing for detecting the change, and transmitting the self identification information to the other electronic apparatus or apparatuses connected after the change in the connected state

20 said judging processing comprising processing for judging whether or not said one electronic apparatus has the highest priority by comparing the received identification information for the other electronic apparatus or apparatuses with the self identification information.

25

19. The priority determination program according to claim 18, characterized by further comprising

processing for storing apparatus connection
5 information representing the electronic apparatuses which are connected to one another on the basis of said received identification information for the other electronic apparatus or apparatuses,

said operation unit operating the electronic
10 apparatuses connected on the basis of said stored apparatus connection information.

20. A priority determination program executed by a processing device in one of a plurality of electronic
15 apparatuses that can be connected to one another, are respectively assigned priorities, and respectively have operation units each performing a predetermined operation, characterized by comprising:

processing for detecting the change in the states of
20 power supplies in the plurality of electronic apparatuses which are connected to one another;

processing for identifying the electronic apparatus in which the power supply is in the on state out of the electronic apparatus or apparatuses connected after the change in the
25 states of the power supplies by communicating with the

connected other electronic apparatus or apparatuses in response to the detection of the change in the states of the power supplies by said processing for detecting the change;

processing for judging whether or not said one
5 electronic apparatus has the highest priority on the basis of the priority of each of the identified electronic apparatuses; and

processing for allowing the operation performed by said operation unit when it is judged that said one electronic
10 apparatus has the highest priority, while inhibiting the operation performed by said operation unit when it is judged that said one electronic apparatus does not have the highest priority.

15 21. The priority determination program according to claim 20, characterized in which

priorities are previously set, respectively, in identification information for identifying said plurality of electronic apparatuses,

20 said identifying processing comprising
processing for receiving the identification information, together with power supply information representing the states of the power supplies, from the other electronic apparatus or apparatuses connected after the
25 change in the states of the power supplies in response to the

detection of the change, and transmitting power supply
information representing the state of the self power supply,
together with the self identification information, to the
other electronic apparatus or apparatuses connected after the
5 change in the connected state,

said judging processing comprising

processing for judging whether or not said one
electronic apparatus out of the electronic apparatuses in
which the power supplies are in the on state has the highest
10 priority by comparing the identification information for the
electronic apparatuses in which the power supplies are in the
on state on the basis of the power supply information for the
other electronic apparatus or apparatuses and the self power
supply information which have been received.

15

22. The priority determination program according to
claim 21, characterized by further comprising

processing for storing apparatus connection
information representing the electronic apparatuses which
20 are connected to one another on the basis of said received
identification information for the other electronic
apparatus or apparatuses,

said operation unit operating the electronic
apparatuses connected on the basis of said stored apparatus
25 connection information.

23. An electronic apparatus that can be connected to the other electronic apparatus or apparatuses, characterized in that

5 the electronic apparatus has an inherent number capable of determining a priority in a predetermined function in the connected state with the other electronic apparatus or apparatuses.